

SEIU Local 503, OPEU
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Nov. 7
VOTE FOR PUBLIC
SERVICES

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Bargaining 2007: It's Your Contract

by Joe DiNicola
SEIU Local 503, OPEU President

Elected bargaining team delegates from Department of Administrative Services (DAS), Oregon University System (OUS) and Homecare are ready to bargain 2007-2009 contracts on behalf of more than 30,000 co-workers.

SEIU members face the constant challenge of rising health care costs. Oregon remains one of only three states where we have held the line for fully-paid health care premiums for workers and family members. However, health care alone isn't enough. Members also know that wages must keep pace with inflation, and for many job classifications, salaries are still below market. In this contract we need quality health benefits and wage increases for State and Higher Ed workers.

This is the third contract Homecare members will negotiate. While significant progress has been made, Homecare workers know wages and benefits are still not adequate. Real raises, expanded healthcare coverage, increased paid leave, and access to training are primary goals. Workers' Comp coverage, a right for most Oregonians, also remains an issue we must bargain in every Homecare contract.

Outstanding Teams

SEIU Local 503, OPEU has outstanding bargaining teams. We have terrific researchers, great team leaders and a top-notch legal department. However, we don't win contracts just sitting at the bargaining table. Every member has a part to play. Here are three things you can do to make sure we can win:

1. Vote in the November election

The outcome decides which candidate will be the Governor who sits across the table from us when we bargain our contracts. The outcome of Legislative races all over the state decides who will write the Oregon budget for 2007 - 2009. That budget sets a limit on the amount of money available for our wages and benefits. Finally, we must defeat Ballot Measures 48 and 41 to protect vital services and the dollars to pay for them.

2. Sign co-workers up as members of our union

Management assesses our strength every day during negotiations. We show our power

when we have 100% support and 100% membership wherever we work. Only members can vote to accept or reject our final contract.

3. Attend contract meetings for updates

Encourage everyone to attend, ask questions and offer suggestions. Your bargaining team can't do it alone. Our power comes from every member who steps up and stands together.

It's your contract. It's your bargaining team. It's up to you to help every member win.

Statewide Office Election Results

SEIU Local 503, OPEU's newly elected statewide officers are:

President: **Joe DiNicola**
Vice-President: **Sonya Reichwein**
Treasurer: **Linda Burgin**
Executive Director: **Leslie Frane**

Thanks to all members who voted and all candidates who put their names forward to serve as statewide officers.

Back to School – Back to Work!



Portland Public School custodians L-R: Tim Young—Astor Elementary, Birdie Kirk—Benson High School, Tina Jacky—Madison High School and Gerald Brandon—Wilson High School are going back to work after a four-year fight to get their jobs back.

Back to school meant something special for a group of SEIU 503 members this year. It meant going back to work. Custodians at Portland Public Schools (PPS) have been fighting to go back to work for more than four years. In 2002 Portland Public Schools fired the custodians and outsourced their work to a private company. In October 2005, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that PPS had broken State labor law by outsourcing the custodial work.

Birdie Kirk, head custodian at Benson High School in NE Portland and a member of the SEIU steering committee that helped return custodians to their jobs, said, "I'm really glad to be back, but I know this is not the end of it – it's just the beginning. We have achieved one huge victory: getting back to work. Now, we have to fight for a new contract."

The school district's opening bargaining proposal would cut the custodians' pay by approximately 47%. But after our recent victory, the custodians are more ready than ever to fight for a good contract.